

Stephen Friedman Gallery

Artnet
The Top 10 Booths at Independent New York 2016
Brian Boucher
4 March 2016



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The fair is in a terrific new setting.



Image: Philippe Decrauzat at Elizabeth Dee gallery (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

"After being at the Armory Show on the piers for five hours yesterday, being here is like a vacation!" said ICA Miami director Ellen Salpeter, talking to artnet News at the new Tribeca venue for the Independent art fair.

Several dealers and other visitors to the fair said that Spring Studios, on Varick Street, struck them as a marked upgrade over the fair's previous quarters, at the former Dia Art Foundation building in Chelsea.

"They've taken an event space and turned it into an art space," New York dealer Kerry Schuss told artnet News, "and that's not an easy thing to do."

Striking full-height windows on two of the fair's floors, along with high ceilings and views toward the Hudson River, provide a terrific new setting. Seen circulating were collectors like Frédéric de Goldschmidt, Dean Valentine, and Marty Margulies, New Museum director Lisa Phillips, and ex-REM frontman Michael Stipe.

"The light is excellent, and the space is great, and it makes people feel good, and when they feel good, they want to buy," said New York collector Peter Hort.

Among the many excellent booths at the fair's seventh edition, here are artnet News' picks for the top ten.

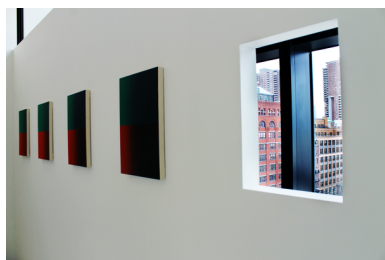


Image: Philippe Decrauzat at Elizabeth Dee gallery (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

1. Philippe Decrauzat at Elizabeth Dee

Decrauzat toys with space and perception at Dee's booth, which sits on a platform which you'll access by climbing a few steps up from the floor level. At the center of the booth is a hole in the platform whose dimensions echo the proportions of the booth itself. Hanging on the wall is a series of two-tone paintings; one spot in the enfilade is given to a cavity in the wall through which you can peer out the window toward the Hudson and the Garden State.

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Image: Pope.L at Mitchell-Innes & Nash (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

2. Pope.L at Mitchell-Innes & Nash

“Black people are shit,” reads a colorful, large canvas by Pope.L, one of many works that hijack racial associations by starting with absurd proclamations like “green people are” and so on.



Image: Pope.L at Mitchell-Innes & Nash (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

At the booth’s center, meanwhile, an L-shaped coffin sits on the floor atop a copy of a book titled *The Birth of Nations* (not the same as the infamous D.W. Griffith film of 1915). From within the coffin comes an indistinct rumbling that is the sound of a flag flapping in the wind.

The ensemble provides a characteristically piquant portrait of American race relations in the age of Black Lives Matter.



Image: Ei Arakawa & Karl Holmqvist at Gavin Brown's enterprise (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

3. Karl Holmqvist at Gavin Brown's enterprise

Gavin Brown knows how to stage knockout fair presentations, and the black-and-white booth-sized installation by and Karl Holmqvist keeps up the tradition. The floor is covered with clothes picked up at charity thrift stores (yes, you can walk on them),

while the wall is plastered with slogans that question whether the act of charity even works. The wallpaper is in collaboration with Ei Arakawa.

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The whole thing will cost you only \$20,000.



Image: Robert Barber at Kerry Schuss (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

4. Robert Barber at Kerry Schuss

Ninety-three-year-old artist Robert Barber came into the public eye with a retrospective at the MOCA Tucson last year, and will have a solo at Kerry Schuss' New York gallery in two weeks.

A series of "freeway paintings," which Barber began in the 1970s, lines Schuss's tiny booth. The bright, geometric canvases recall Ellsworth Kelly and Frank Stella but have a panache that's all their own.

5. DIS at Project Native Informant

The cosmetics technique known as contouring, once for professionals but lately popularized by the Kardashians, provides part of the impetus for a work by DIS that shows a stock photo-type image of a modern family, their faces marred with strange white marks, fanning across their foreheads, cheeks, and chins.

Crawling back and forth across the already spotless glass atop the image is a window-cleaning robot, suggesting an arch commentary on gilding the lily. But such beauty comes at a cost: In an edition of five, the work is priced around \$10,000.



Image: Paintings by Marina Adams and furniture by Katie Stout at Karma Gallery. Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

6. Karma

The New York gallery and bookstore is showing airy, colorful paintings on paper by Marina Adams in hues like pink, peach, and neon yellow. The staff sits atop snazzy chairs, designed by Katie Stout, created

by wrapping pre-existing furniture in scraps of fabric and encasing it all in clear plastic.

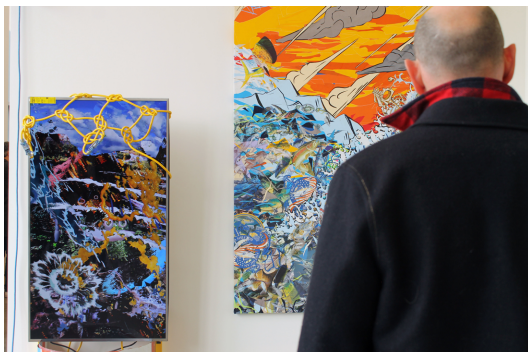


Image: Borna Sammak at JTT (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

7. Borna Sammak at JTT

Borna Sammak's insanely labor-intensive, hyperactive, hallucinatory video-sculptures and intensely detailed works on canvas make for a bold presentation at Jasmin Tsou's booth.

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The latter consist of T-shirt graphics showing text and images ranging from salty slogans like “get your balls wet” to cartoon renditions of bald eagles.



Image: Paintings by Alex Chavez and wallpaper by Michel Auder at Martos Gallery (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

8. Various Artists at Martos Gallery

Bask in the geometric wallpaper designs of Michel Auder, which provides an unexpectedly apt backdrop for a faux-naïve painting by Alex Chaves.



Image: Jess Fuller at Martos Gallery (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

You can sit on the Jess Fuller chairs that are shaped like people (don't worry—there are not actual people inside). Also at Martos, get a thrill from the wild ceramic works of Jennie Jieun Lee.



Image: Donna Huanca at Peres Projects (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

9. Donna Huanca at Peres Projects

wall in a loosely choreographed performance.

The highlight of this solo presentation of paintings and sculpture by Donna Huanca is a wall that bears the ghostly traces of paint from the naked bodies of several dancers who pressed themselves against the

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The performance took place Wednesday, the day before the fair opened and, according to the gallery's Nick Koenigsknecht, it happened while people were setting up lights and hanging paintings. It had a transcendent and even spiritual quality, he said, which somehow comes through in the indexical marks on the wall.



Image: Corazon Sol at The Box (2016). Photo: Rain Embuscado for artnet News.

10. The Box

Artist Corazon del Sol's work at the Box lets participants wield a game controller in the shape of a vulva with a joystick (ahem) where the clitoris would be. "If you need to restart the video game," Corazon del Sol told us, "just stick your finger in the anus."

If that's not unsettling enough, know that Del Sol's project is based on a three-generational history, with her mother and grandmother, both named Eugenia Butler, as the subjects. Butler mère was a conceptual artist, Butler grandmère a gallerist, both of them lapsed into relative obscurity despite having shown artists like John Baldessari, Joseph Kosuth, and Alan Ruppersberg.

Works by both Del Sol and her mother are on view, and serve as a great example of the current rage for unearthing unfairly forgotten histories.